



**Class Struggle 78**

# **Riots and Revolution**

**Socialising Health**

**Revolting Unions**

**Tibet and China**

**Nepal and Maoists**

**African Unrest**

**Survival Socialism**

**Venezuela and Argentina**

**Bolsheviks and Workers Control**

# Riots and Revolution

*The financial crisis that began with the US sub-prime crisis has freed up masses of speculative capital now flooding in and buying up food and fuel. Oil is approaching \$150 a barrel and food prices are being pushed by speculation way above what the masses can afford. Riots over food and fuel prices are breaking out in many countries. Global capitalism is now starving its working class. There is plenty of food for everyone to live healthily. But capitalism does not produce food for the poor when it can sell bio-fuel to the rich. Oil is now becoming the repository of value as the US\$ freefalls. The capitalists are being forced by their drive for profits to fuel the revolution of the oppressed and exploited to overthrow the profit system itself and replace it with a socialist world.*

On top of that the speculation in (not demand for) oil which plays an important part in food production and distribution also pushes up food prices.

This proves that capitalism only produces for profit and not the need of the masses, and must be replaced by socialism that produces for need. It also proves that workers who riot for food are capable of organizing to overthrow capitalism. In all of the countries in which food riots have taken place, the main demands of the people will turn to the overthrow the political regimes that they see as responsible for starving them.

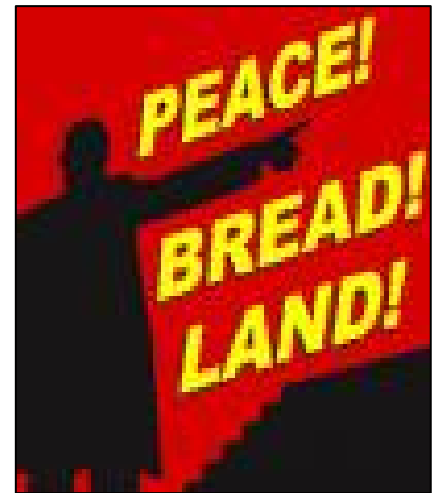
That is why these regimes are desperate to subsidize food prices or increase wages to forestall revolution. But these are paper napkins over the

explosive force building in the masses.

The sellout WSF and left bureaucrats around the world can hold hands and have many solidarity visits, but they and the reformist populist regimes they support cannot prevent the coming catastrophe. [See article

*Nepal under the Maoists*] They cannot defeat the causes of mass poverty and starvation that is the inevitable result of capitalism.

What they can do is weaken and confuse the masses so that instead of uniting to attack the system which is killing them they are pressuring into killing one another as a form of capitalist divide and rule [see article *South Africa and Zimbabwe*].



Revolutionaries must intervene in these riots to 'turn the guns' on the ruling class. In this current crisis this means occupying the farms and factories, putting them under workers' control, forming workers militias to defend them, and uniting the workers and poor farmers of all countries to overthrow the capitalist regimes that exploit and oppress them, creating a federation of socialist republics on every continent. Such a program must be implemented internationally under the leadership of revolutionary Marxists forged in the struggles to expose and defeat all the treacherous leaders that seek to divide and rule workers in every country. [see *Survival Socialism* below]

## Brief stuff

### Children of the Poor miss budget goodies

CPAG report on child poverty is no surprise since income gaps have been widening in NZ since the 1970s. The biggest gaps occurred under the impact of the Rogernomics revolution in the 1980s and got worse in the 1990s under National's new right policies.

The shift from Keynesian income redistribution to market forces setting wages levels could only work if the social wage was cut and benefits fell below market minimum wage. This reflects one of the first principles of capitalism that workers must be forced to offer their labor for sale on

the free market without any other means of subsistence.

Labour Governments since 1999 have attempted to restore bargaining power to workers by encouraging the revival of the unions. But they have compromised with the new right to accept the principle of market wages and allowed the minimum wage to fall below inflation. Increases in the nominal minimum wage have been the result of organized union protests and pressure from the Greens.

Keeping benefits below the legal minimum wage has meant that income top-ups have come in the form of negative income tax subsidies to the employers to keep wages down. This is a selective form of the

old universal social wage. But today it is targeted to 'working' families. The social wage going to beneficiaries has not made up for the Ruthonomics cuts of the 1990s and this shows up in the poverty statistics and the health and other social risks facing the children of the poor. But under capitalism this is normal for the *children of the reserve army of labor*.

### Debating Free Trade and Lost Sovereignty'

In a recent article on Scoop <http://election08.scoop.co.nz/us-trade-expert-finds-fishhooks-in-chinanz-trade-deal/> Gordon Campbell reports on some 'fishhooks'

in the NZ/China FTA. These are the right of Chinese firms to sue the NZ government for any loss of profits due to domestic policy changes. As critics of NAFTA such as radical Jane Kelsey have said for years, the idea of free trade is really free investment and is a loss of any real national sovereignty.

Our position is that the New Zealand semi-colony has never had much 'national sovereignty' but that a nationalist ideology which expressed NZ's role as a small dependent economy can be used by the weak national bourgeoisie to enlist the working class to back its national interests.

That fact separates us from the nationalists like Kelsey (website) CAFCA, the Alliance and sundry anarchists who want to recover NZ's 'lost sovereignty'. But it also separates us from fake internationalists like the Workers Party.

NZ nationalism is a powerful ideology that is not an infectious idea in the fevered imaginations of xenophobes like the National Front, patriotic unionists like the MUW, and spread from there to young anarchists. Nationalism has its material roots in the economic foundations of the nation.

Self-proclaimed 'internationalists' like the Workers Party who speak out against NZ nationalism think that NZ nationalism reflects the interests of NZ imperialists to aggressively dominate and super-exploit poor countries like East Timor, Afghanistan or Iraq. This is wrong.

NZ is a small, dependent semi-colonial economy which has slumped in the OECD 'stakes' in the last two decades. It is now in the same league as Argentina and Chile as former 'rich' semi-colonies which got 'rich' on good prices for pastoral exports, but are now increasingly 'poor' semi-colonies. It is this semi-colonial character that sets the material conditions for NZ's nationalist ideology.

Therefore, to the extent that NZ does experience imperialist domination by the US, EU, Australia and Japan (not to mention China which while not imperialist is widely perceived as such) then populist leaders will attempt to convince workers that they share a common 'national interest' with the national bourgeoisie in struggling for 'lost sovereignty'.

Winston Peters has made his trademark attacks on migrants to inflame fears over 'Asians'. There is a racist backlash against Maori who are seen to have usurped the 'sovereignty' of Europeans. Don Brash's racist Orewa speech of 2004 tapped that nerve. The Amalgamated Workers Union has a history of 'dobbing-in' illegal migrants who 'lower working conditions', to the Immigration Department. And so on.

Those would-be Marxists who ignore this reality will find themselves counter-posing to the very immediate appeals of nationalism that divides and rules the proletariat inside NZ and internationally, an abstract and journalistic internationalism, headlined by international solidarity campaigns that never actually challenging the material basis of the nationalist and racist divisions inside the working class.

## Union Democracy and Independence

Revolutionaries want the maximum independence of organised workers from the capitalist state. Workers independent of capitalist influence will be better able to fight to turn the unions into militant

organisation can allow union leadership positions to be held by any member or official that is compromised by the rules of the capitalist class.

The first major attack on union independence came during the period of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act (ICAA) from 1894. But in 1908 some strong unions – which came to be known as the 'Red Fed' – deliberately "deregistered" from the ICAA in order to have greater independence from the bosses' state. Those unions had the worksite power to force the bosses to the table on their terms. Those workers knew these rules were tying them to the capitalist system. So the ICAA was known as "Labour's Leg Iron" because it held back the class struggle within the legalities of the ICAA.

Today's labour law is no less a "leg iron" in its effect on workers. Fluffy language about "good faith" bargaining does not disguise the reality that the law ties workers into the Employment Relations Act (ERA) just like a leg iron!

At the recent Workers Party 'Marxism', Unite! National Secretary Matt McCarten acknowledged the limits of the labour law . . . for union officials! The ERA says they must act in "good faith" and allows capitalists or the ERA "Authority" to penalise officials that don't stick to the ERA rules. McCarten's solution is to protect the union officials - by side-stepping the ERA - and not having any employees of the union. In that way officials couldn't be sued by the capitalists, or pursued by the ERA.

We agree that the independence of union needs to include financial independence but not by paying the officials under the counter. The point is that as soon as unions begin to fight seriously they will break the bosses law, not just the ERA, but every other law against picketing, freedom of speech, anti-terror laws etc. There is no shortage of laws to penalize unions and criminalise class struggle.

What McCarten is talking about is a union where the officials are fined or jailed to stop the rank and file from mobilizing. But no union leader worth his or her salt is jailed without the ranks mobilising and breaking many laws. [See the *Appeal of the Las Heras political prisoners*].

In NZ the biggest and most



democratic organizations in the interests of all workers. As Marxists, we know the capitalist class fights to retain its hold on power, and one aspect of its class preservation is to control all workers' organisations.

Too frequently in NZ history union officials have worked to put unions under the control of the capitalists through their laws. That is why no independent workers

effective industrial action ever was the 1951 lockout which was illegal from the start. By refusing to work overtime the workers were locked out. The dispute lasted 151 days and was defeated only by the state forces using fascist-type laws and repression to divide and weaken the workers.

Thus the power of the labour movement cannot be developed inside the labor law. The arrest of unionists has to be met with rejection of the legal penalties and mobilization of the power of the whole labour movement.

Meanwhile, there is no point having assets and funds that can be easily seized by the state. The independence of the unions must also include their finances and assets. Where possible the union should put its funds into unofficial accounts under rank and file control. The union should have no legal assets that can be seized, or have any income from assets that can be abused by the bureaucracy.

An independent union will have funds available to members in struggle – but out of reach of the ERA or capitalists who might try to sue or seize those funds. Those funds are built up from the members' dues. The collection of those dues should be under the control of the members and not deducted by the employer so as the money is never touched by the bosses or the state!

## For revolting unions

In the imperialist epoch the unions cannot be politically neutral. They cannot stay within the limits of the bosses' state. That is, they cannot be reformist unions because the conditions of rotten imperialist capitalism leaves no room for lasting reforms.

*Either* the unions, in the hands of the union bureaucracy and reformists of all kinds, become an auxiliary part of the capitalist state used to subordinate the workers and prevent the revolution; *or*, under a revolutionary leadership that has won its place in the struggles of the workers and exploited people, they become an instrument of the workers' revolutionary movement,

The fake Trotskyists have become reformists and now manage 'statified'

unions as a 'left' bureaucracy. They keep workers under the control of the bosses' state by means of the legal framework within which the union bureaucracies function.

Against all of these traitors, we fight, for the total, unconditional independence of the unions from the capitalist state, and to transform the unions into organs of the majority of exploited masses and not of the 'middle class' labour aristocracy.

***Down with the ERA! Out with the bosses state from the workers' organizations! Down with all bourgeois laws that regulate how workers must organize: we workers must organize ourselves as we want!***

We fight for the maximum workers democracy inside the unions, and against the labour bureaucracy and aristocracy.

***For revolutionary leaders in the unions! Down with the labor bureaucracy and the labor aristocracy! Down with bosses deducting union dues! End the privileges of the leaders of the unions! For leaders mandated and recallable at any time by the assemblies of the rank and file, paid no more than the average wage of the workers, and on ending their term in office, returning to work!***

## What price Suicide?

A recent book tells you how to kill yourself painlessly and panics the right to lifers. But all this information is already on the internet. It's easy to kill yourself. Living is the difficult bit. Capitalism kills in countless ways, but euthanasia is now a business. Is this one industry we should ban? No. But we should ban capitalism and make life much easier for the living. [SST 11 May]

What people fear about suicide is that it shows that capitalist society destroys our lives. They cannot conceive of suicide as other than a 'consumer choice'. Life becomes reduced to the commodities you consume and death is just another commodity you buy. What this reflects is that capitalism values people according to their market worth.

Rejecting this valuation of your 'self' questions the basis of capitalism's 'value'. If you are 'devalued' in life then it means that you are only valued in death, like the

Aboriginal kids who grab high tension wires because they will win momentary fame when they are dead. Or the 17 Welsh teenagers in Bridgend whose looked for a brief celebrity in death.

As *Spiked Online* says: what does this tell us about life?

*"What's striking about the Bridgend suicides is that far from feeling forlorn, family and friends frequently talk about how happy or content the young people seemed. To fear the reporting of suicide, or even a fictional portrayal, tells us as much about an anxious perception of the social world as it does about the individual suicides."*

*Ultimately, the fear of glorifying suicide, or of offending the sensitivities of the bereaved, is not about the Bridgend suicides and their bereaved families at all. The media's anxiety draws not from moral scruples, but from a broader cultural uncertainty. So demoralised have we become, so unable, it seems, to offer a compelling vision of the good life, that we fear that the merest evocation of suicide, romanticised or not, will persuade people to choose death over life."*

But suicide is not a rational consumer choice. It's a killing of the 'self' by capitalism. Win or die. Take the case of Toran Henry, the Auckland 17 year-old bullied at Takapuna Grammar school and humiliated in a fight that was posted on *YouTube*. Despite being on antidepressants his social worker allegedly told him drinking alcohol in the weekends was OK.

Then *NZ Herald* columnist Noelle McCarthy commenting on this case said that there have always been those "outside the herd" and the only way out for them is to join the herd. Talk about the herd mentality? This is caving in to the 'winners and losers' culture that capitalism forces on young people.

What is to be done? The Greens are calling for an inquiry into the school and Marinoto (Waitakere youth mental health). This is like saying vote for your life! Don't put your hope in the vote! We say kill capitalism not yourself!



# Socializing Health

*The Labour-led government's budget announcement was \$750 million extra per year for health services. \$250 million of this money is promised to specific new projects the most necessary is \$40 million for so called "elective" surgery to reduce waiting lists. Great for those who can get onto a waiting list now the administration of health services are so highly skilled at dropping people off waiting lists – 'referred back to their GP'. The same amount; \$40million is for the DHB administration to use to "improve efficiency" – unfortunately the only efficiency they seem to come up with is throwing people off waitlists onto the scrapheap.*

After all the new projects are accounted for that actually leaves only \$500million is to cover increasing inflation at 4.5%. Costs in the health sector increase above the rate of general inflation, since health is a field where technology is expensive and new drugs are expensive, and the costs of training the health workforce have increased in part due to student fees and loans, and also through increased specialisation meaning longer years of training.

Also the quality control processes in the health sector add costs, e.g. funding of the Health and Disability Commission, Mental Health Commission and all the Auditors, Quality managers, etc.

So government funding has not kept pace with the rate of inflation, this means Health services are lost and District Health Boards (DHBs) are set up to fail to provide adequate healthcare to their regions. The Labour-led governments have been as guilty of this as any since they have continued underfunding health by not keeping running costs up to the rate of health sector inflation.

The pseudo-democracy of voting for DHB members at local council election time is fake in many ways. For starters the Government still holds the purse strings so the DHB has no control over its income. The central government has the power to throw out an entire local DHB; and they did recently to Hawkes Bay DHB, in spite of recent elections.

Workers need to reject this capitalist bullshit democracy:

- **For workers "councils" based on workers who are organised in unions, i.e. local workers to create set up meetings of unionised workers.**

Across unions all members in the region would have the right to elect our own workers' "councils". These councils would have to be "off the books" because capitalism would try to prevent workers organising independently. Just like the capitalists try to control the union officials through laws – the employment relations act ties union leaders to the system.

- **For workers independence of action and organisation, avoid any compromise with the laws of the capitalists!**

Increasingly health work has been contracted out to the private sector. In Counties Manukau district private sector has taken 11% of 'elective' surgery and this will be going up to 14%. That is, about 1800 patients for \$6.6 million of our money will be going in towards the profits of private hospitals.

- **For workers councils to stop the privatisation of health services:**
- **Demand the opening of the DHB books. Set up workers' "councils", including rank and file members of health workers' unions, with mandated delegates to inspect the DHB's books.**
- **Fight bulk funding of health services: No contracting out to private health**

## Striking workers



**profiteers – end existing contracts without compensation, and under control of the delegates of frontline health workers.**

- **Build workers councils to prepare for workers industrial action - prepare for workers occupation against contracting out services.**
- **Prepare for workers control of all health services, public and private.**
- **Socialise health care under workers control: No compensation to private health profiteers.**

**For Workers Control of Health!**

# Tibet and China

*The outrage directed at China's supposed abuse of 'human rights' in Tibet was not about Tibet at all. It was a huge displacement of decades of fears and anger at what has happened to the world. China is becoming the whipping boy for the failures of both capitalism and what is still called "socialism" in China.*

The capitalist ruling classes in the West know this, and are trying to divert this fear and loathing onto China over its treatment of Tibetan protests. What is getting lost in this China rage is the real culprit here.

Imperialism which has imposed its capitalist brutality on the East for 300 years is now hypocritically trying to shift the blame onto the former colony for not living up to a mythological set of Western values such as 'democracy', 'human rights' and a cynical self-serving interpretation of the right of nations to self-determination.

This rage is real because neither capitalism nor the brand of bureaucratic socialism practiced in the former USSR or in China until the 1990s could provide for the most basic of human needs, nor defend the most basic of human rights. Capitalism exists as a society that must impoverish the masses in order to maintain its profits. Marx called this the general law of capital accumulation. Under capitalism it leads to barbarism when the masses fight back and are repressed and defeated.

In Russia and China "socialism" degenerated into a totalitarian dictatorship of the bureaucracy over the masses. The bureaucracy used its power to live as a parasitic caste on the backs of the masses. Again, when the masses rejected this, the mass gulags were the answer of the ruling caste.

Today, the costs of the capitalist crisis are being imposed on workers in China, Tibet and the whole of Asia. We can expect peasant and workers uprisings against rocketing food and fuel prices. The national bourgeoisies will try to contain these uprisings with tricks and repression.

It is necessary to resist the capitalist offensive with our own counter-offensive, to organize ourselves to fight for socialism to stop capitalist barbarism. Socialism takes all that is good from capitalism in its efficient organization of production

and subordinates it not to private profit, but to the needs of the masses as determined by democratic organizations of the masses. All the food, all the energy, all the resources needed to satisfy those needs will be harnessed to the collective will of the masses.

The masses in Tibet and China are currently divided by their ruling



classes. Once the workers and farmers of both countries recognize a common interest in survival socialism, then the democratic rights that cannot be met by either capitalism or 'market socialism' will be more than met by a world socialist revolution.

- Tibet is a historically distinct region separate from central China, but has been under its influence or direct occupation for 100s of years.
- Tibet as a nation has shown historically that it can survive economically only by being integrated into China.
- Tibet has the right to national self-determination and this includes the right of the majority of people to restore the Dalai Lama. But this right does not extend to Tibetans

attacking and killing ethnic Han who have settled in Tibet.

- We do not recognize the 'government in exile' of the Dalai Lama, since there is no evidence that it represents the popular will of the Tibetan masses.
- The exaggerated response to the protests and police actions by the Chinese regime can only be explained by a US imperialist campaign for a 'color' revolution to embarrass China, to weaken the bloc between China and Russia, and ultimately to gain unchallenged control of Central Asian oil.
- It is hypocritical for the 'Western' left to blame China for the current situation in Tibet, and to appeal to their imperialist governments to protect 'human rights' in Tibet.
- We do not support the campaign to protest the human rights abuses of the Chinese state by boycotting the Olympics. This is the task of the Chinese working class.
- The right of self-determination for Tibet can only be advanced when it is taken up by the workers of China who make the Tibetan cause, like that of every other national minority, their own cause; and by workers in the imperialist countries who reject the cynical manipulation of Tibetan national rights and the government in exile of the Dalai Lama to advance the US imperialist agenda in Asia.
- For a Federation of Socialist Republics of Asia!

# South Africa and Zimbabwe

*Race riots in South Africa and starvation in Zimbabwe are being used once more to paint the picture of a backward barbaric Africa that needs to be rescued by the 'civilized' West. But when we look at the causes of the race riots and the intense struggle inside Zimbabwe we see that the causes are not rooted in Africa but in the history of capitalist colonization and imperialism.*

On the contrary we see that it is the ANC betrayal of the South African masses that has left them without jobs and housing and primed them to blame the Zimbabwean and Mozambican migrant workers who have flooded into South Africa to find work. It is not the business of Western liberals to point the finger at South African workers since they share in the benefits of the super-exploitation of that country. This is a problem that these workers must solve for themselves. The solution lies in a revolutionary leadership building an internationalist movement that mobilizes workers to root out the basic cause of the problem, capitalism and imperialism in South Africa.

Similarly, in Zimbabwe, Mugabe's restrictions on the NGOs food aid during the current election is an understandably reaction to the way imperialism, not content with imposing sanctions to ruin the economy, is using the NGOs as an internal political opposition.

Like South Africa, the solution to Zimbabwe's problems are not the business of the same Western imperialism that refused to allow that country full economic independence and used Mugabe as their agent to block any real fight for independence. Mugabe's 'break' with imperialism has nothing to do with belatedly fighting for independence but everything to do with desperately holding onto power. It is the task of the Zimbabwean workers and poor peasants to throw out Mugabe, not imperialist powers or their stooge NGOs inside Zimbabwe.

Before these workers and poor peasants can unite to overthrow the national bourgeoisies that act as a barrier between them and independence from imperialism, a revolutionary left must come into existence with a program for revolutionary struggle based on the lessons learned of what is necessary to win.

First among these lessons is recognizing the hostile class interests of the national bourgeoisies that have acted as the agents of imperialism and betrayed the hopes of workers and peasants for real independence and for economic security in an African Federation of Socialist Republics.

## **ANC betrays South African workers and peasants**

In South Africa there can be no revolutionary that does not fight the ANC as a treacherous populist party led by the Stalinist SACP that formed a popular front government with the White racist Nationalists in 1994 to end the apartheid system! At a time when the struggle of the masses for generations had created the power to not only end apartheid but to complete the revolution, removing the white regime and imposing a workers' and peasants' government and planned socialist economy, the ANC did a deal with imperialism to administer a non-racial capitalist South Africa.

The result has been more than a decade of open collaboration with imperialism to super-exploit South Africa's resources and labor-power. It is this terrible betrayal that has allowed the whole of South Africa to remain in imperialism's grip, forcing South African workers to compete with migrant workers for slave labor jobs.

Once this lesson has been learned, it is necessary to mobilize workers and poor peasants to unite all workers, across nationality, ethnicity, gender etc to fight for jobs, land and decent housing and social services. In the process of these struggles the proletariat will build the unity and develop the consciousness necessary to overthrow the South African pro-imperialist regime, form a Workers and Peasants' Government and create a socialist economic powerhouse that will provide resources and inspiration for the rest of Southern Africa.

## **ZANU-PF betrays Zimbabwe workers and peasants**

In Zimbabwe there can be no revolutionary that does not reject both wings of the national bourgeoisie that are competing for the imperialist franchise to manage Zimbabwean capitalism. The British attempted to keep Zimbabwe as a neo-colony with the British settlers ruling in tandem with ZANU-PF. This meant that the workers and peasants did not get the land or the jobs that they needed with national independence. Mugabe finally broke with British imperialism when it became clear that his faction of the black bourgeoisie would not get rich from this continued white settler domination.

He turned to China and other countries to back his bourgeois nationalist regime instead. British and US Imperialism then imposed drastic sanctions which have ruined the economy and sponsored a rival MDC faction of the national bourgeoisie which is prepared to collaborate openly with imperialism. Both factions of the national bourgeoisie fear the mobilization of the masses to break from imperialism because this would also overthrow their own class rule.

In the face of an US and British imperialist campaign to isolate Zimbabwe and shift all the blame for its economic collapse onto the Mugabe regime, Zimbabwean workers must organize in solidarity with South African workers to build a movement to challenge both wings of the national bourgeoisie who are no more than junior partners for this or that imperialist power, or in the case of China, a powerful emerging market economy.

**Their program must be for occupations of land and of industry under workers and peasants control and for the socialization of the banks and all the key sectors of the economy.**

# Nepal under the Maoists

*The election victory of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) has created an acid test for socialists who claim to represent the interests of workers and the oppressed. There are many who welcome the victory as a progressive step forward to socialism. Some support the CPN (M) position that a period of capitalist development is necessary before a socialist revolution is possible in Nepal. Revolutionaries around the world have rejected this policy as the revival of the classic Stalinist theory of stages. They say that history proves that unless the workers and peasants reject a bloc with the national bourgeoisie and socialize the economy under a Workers' and Peasants' Government, then the national democratic revolution will be driven back by counter-revolution. This is the situation that faces us in Nepal today.*

## Historic betrayal in the making

In Nepal, the CPN (M) which led an armed struggle for over a decade recently stood for parliamentary elections in April this year. The outcome of the elections saw the CPN (M) win 220 seats in a 601 seat Constituent Assembly. The CPN (M) leadership has stated that its objective is to make use of parliament to develop the backward capitalist economy of Nepal in collaboration with the national bourgeoisie and imperialism.

Maoists around the world hail the election results in Nepal and endorse the CPN (M) two-stage theory. The country has to develop modern capitalism before it can create the conditions for socialism.

Trotskyists have rejected this two-stage theory as a Menshevik policy of class collaboration with an almost non-existent national bourgeoisie to boost the strength of that class in relation to imperialism. Yet in the epoch of imperialism the national bourgeoisies in former colonies and semi-colonies cannot be more than small junior partners of imperialism.

We agree. Given a Maoist mass movement that has overwhelming popularity and its own People's Liberation Army, it is a crime not to nationalise the land and socialise all capitalist industry such as it is. Not only a crime against the people of Nepal but of India and all Asia, and Latin America, where workers and poor peasants will look to each and every socialist revolution as inspiration to drive them on to their own, and

ultimately, world socialist revolution.

The only explanation for this betrayal can be that the Maoist leadership wants to position itself to become part of the Nepalese bourgeoisie, and do deals with the various capitalist and imperialist powers that may have an interest in exploiting the workers and peasants of Nepal. Thus the CPN (M) will become the new state bourgeoisie in alliance with the existing national bourgeoisie and the landlords. Removing the King is merely a smokescreen to hide the fact that the ruling class property will be left intact.

It is therefore necessary to condemn the Stalinist two-stage policy of the CPN (M) and call on the masses to break with this treacherous leadership. Only the overthrow of the national bourgeoisie and creation of a workers and peasants government can create the conditions for social development.

The Bolshevik Revolution proved that anything short of a socialist revolution would fail to complete the bourgeois revolution. Every other revolution since has confirmed this fundamental Marxist truth, either in victory like the Cuban revolution, or in defeat, like every other revolution.

## History lessons

In Russia the Bolsheviks proved that the weak bourgeoisie sided with



the counter-revolution of General Kornilov in the attempt to smash the soviets. Without the independence of the Soviets from the Bourgeois state the revolution would have failed.

In Germany in the following year, soldiers and sailors mutinied and formed armed councils throughout Germany. In a panic the ruling class forced the Kaiser to abdicate to allow a republic to be formed. After the assassination of their main leaders, Liebknecht and Luxemburg, the revolutionary Spartacists were too weak to take the leadership. The workers councils were bought off by the treacherous Social Democratic Party of the Second International with the promise of a bourgeois republic. The failure of the German revolution isolated and USSR and sealed its fate at the hands of the counter-revolution of the Stalinist bureaucracy in league with world capitalism.



In China after 1925, the Stalinist 3<sup>rd</sup> International, despite the warnings of the Left Opposition, imposed the "bloc of four classes" i.e. a popular front, based on the Menshevik theory of stages that all four classes should collaborate in the national democratic stage of the revolution. In this popular front the CCP was politically subordinated to the KMT of Chiang Kai-shek. The terrible result was the physical extermination of the working class leadership of the CCP by the Nationalists in 1927. Under the Stalinist/Maoist policy of class collaboration, the disorientated party then fought a national revolution based on a peasant army leading to the revolution of 1949. Mao invited the bourgeoisie to join his national revolution. They refused and the CCP had no option but to form a bureaucratic workers' and peasants' regime to develop the national economy. Far from being a socialist revolution in which the workers' and peasants' soviets ruled, the bureaucracy took power, failing to develop the economy successfully. Since the 1980s the bureaucracy has transformed itself into a new bourgeoisie by going down the capitalist road of 'market socialism'.

In Spain in the 1930s, the extremely weak bourgeoisie was propped up by the Stalinists in the popular front government of the Republic. So weak was the bourgeoisie, the CP actually filled its shoes as the "shadow of the bourgeoisie", to use Trotsky's phrase. The failure of the anarchists and left communists to break out of this popular front again saw the revolution fall to bloody defeat. This betrayal was part of the Stalinist politics of the popular front of the 1930s that tied the hands of the workers of Europe behind their backs, preventing the independent revolutionary uprising of the proletariat as the only force that could smash fascism in its infancy.

In Algeria 1962, Chile 1973, Nicaragua 1979, and South Africa 1994, to cite some critical cases, national revolutionary struggles were sold out in the same way. The nationalists, Stalinists and Castroists, all played a role in blocking the formation of independent workers' and poor peasants' parties and

militias capable of defeating not only imperialism, but also the treacherous national bourgeoisie.

In every case the national bourgeoisie, even as a tiny force remained in control of the 'patriotic front' of all classes, and sooner or later disarmed and defeated the popular masses. In Algeria factions of the national bourgeoisie fell out over franchise to control the national economy on behalf of French imperialism. In Chile, social democracy, backed by Castro and



the fake Trotskyists, refused to arm the workers against the military coup. In Nicaragua, the Sandinistas formed a political alliance with sections of the national bourgeoisie and stopped the independent mobilization of the workers and peasants' militias to fight the US-sponsored counter-military 'Contras'.

Most recently, in South Africa, the ANC, controlled by the SACP, entered into an electoral alliance with the white bourgeois National Party. The result was the betrayal of the masses to a popular front that was inevitably dominated by the national capitalists in close collaboration with the imperialists.

#### **A Republic under the Maoists**

Unless the masses wake up to their betrayal by the CPN (M) leadership and fight to take over the leadership of the revolution, in the coming months and years the CPN (M) leadership will write a new bourgeois constitution, do deals with imperialist monopolies, and constitute

itself a new state bourgeoisie. The only question left is which road to 'market socialism' will it take; the Chinese road, the Venezuelan road, the Cuban road, or the road of Indian or Malaysian 'social democracy'?

The Nepalese revolution takes place at a time when the global capitalist economy is heading for a period of instability. The US depression is having flow-on effects into the colonial and semi-colonial world. Food and fuel prices are rocketing up due to increased demand and reduced supply as arable land is switched to production of biofuel. On top of these factors, increasing financial speculation in food and fuel commodity prices is driving up prices. It is clear then that the Maoist leadership's road to capitalist development will have to make major concessions to imperialism.

In this global situation it *appears* to Maoists that one isolated and backward country cannot have a successful socialist revolution now. There is no developed industry, no majority working class, and so no possibility of the pre-conditions for socialism being present. This was also the situation in Russia in 1917, but as we will explain,

Russia's backwardness made a socialist revolution not only possible, but necessary. However, the building of socialism in Russia could only have been successful if a European revolution followed and united its industrial base to the Russian granary. The Russian revolution was driven back towards capitalism by the failure of the German Revolution in 1921. To defend 'socialism in one country' Stalin tried to convince the imperialist bourgeoisies to collaborate with the Red Army in Eastern Europe after World War 2. But imperialism chose deliberately to isolate and destroy the USSR in the Cold War from 1948.

The revolutions in China 1949, Vietnam 1954 and Cuba 1959, were all national revolutions that went further than their petty bourgeois or Stalinist leaders expected, *because the imperialists and national bourgeois refused to collaborate with the new regimes in popular front governments. Today these regimes have been opened up to imperialism*

*and in China and Vietnam capitalism has been restored, while in Cuba capitalist restoration is rapidly approaching completion.*

So the Chinese road or the Cuban road would only be an option for Nepal if global capitalism rejected any compromise with the new regime. This might happen if the masses overthrew the CPN (M) leadership and nationalized the land, industry and banks, forming a Workers and Farmers Government and making a socialist plan.

But under the Maoists today, this is highly unlikely since imperialism is just as keen to exploit Nepal as an 'emerging market' as it is currently doing in China and Cuba, or has done in the past with South Africa and the 'Asian Tigers'. Imperialism is willing to extract super-profits from self-proclaimed 'socialist' or 'communist' regimes because it knows that it can exploit the workers in 'joint ventures' in collaboration with these regimes.

What will the workers get out of such collaboration? Under Maoist rule, Nepal can't follow the Venezuelan road unless it finds oil, gas or other mineral wealth that it can use as leverage to drive hard bargains with the imperialist monopolies.

*This means Nepal will probably go down the road taken by other Maoist dominated regimes in India that are today closely collaborating with the neo-liberal policies of imperialism.*

*Inevitably, the National Democratic stage envisioned by Prachanda and will be a form of market socialism in which the market will be dominated by imperialism and the workers and poor peasants subjected to super-exploitation and oppression.*

### Permanent Revolution

The Menshevik theory of stages is an historical schema, an ideal model, a caricature of Marxism. Marxism claims that socialism cannot arrive before capitalism has exhausted all of its potential to develop the forces of production. However how do we know when this situation has been reached? The Mensheviks filled in the blanks with a checklist that said the working class must be the majority class which meant that capitalist agriculture and heavy industry must have developed.

When the Bolsheviks led a victorious revolution in Russia, lots of Western Marxists complained that the revolution was premature and could not succeed because it hadn't checked off the list. Lenin disagreed, let's make a distinction between the revolution itself, and the building of socialism that follows, he said. A revolution happens when capitalism in crisis creates a situation where the working class refuses to be ruled, and the ruling class cannot rule. Again, how do we know? Lenin's answer, try it and see. In a backward country the national revolution is overdue, so try it.

When the February revolution succeeded in Russia, Lenin (and Trotsky before him) understood that the workers and poor peasants had substituted for the weak bourgeoisie and got rid of the Tsarists and imperialism. Having done this why would they submit to tiny bourgeoisie which was collaborating with the Tsarists to drive back the national revolution just because some Menshevik academics said this was a 'Marxist law of history'? Why not take power in the name of the proletariat and create a launching pad for socialist revolutions in the more advanced capitalist countries? There was no law of Marxism that said...stop!

This breakthrough proved that in a backward country in the epoch of imperialism the national bourgeoisies were in bed with the imperialists so that only the workers and poor peasants could complete the bourgeois revolution in the form of a socialist revolution. Lenin called this the '**uninterrupted**' revolution and Trotsky called it the '**permanent**' revolution.

However, turning the national revolution into a socialist revolution was one thing, building socialism was another. The Bolsheviks always said that the revolution in Russia could not proceed to socialism without a revolution in Europe. Their best hope was the German revolution as discussed above. Even then the Mensheviks said, hang on, Germany has not exhausted the potential of capitalism. Let's get rid of the emperor and have a republic. That will create the conditions for the further development of the forces of production and the pre-conditions for socialism.

But Lenin in 'Imperialism' had already explained that the epoch of imperialism was the last stage of capitalism in decline. The forces of production could not be developed further without massive crises, wars, colonial super-exploitation and oppression. How long must workers in the imperialist countries wait; how long must the oppressed colonial peoples wait? Until the Menshevik professors said capitalism's time was up? NO! Revolt, try it, do it, you have nothing to lose. Even if the revolution fails and you die standing up, this inspires the next revolution!

### Permanent Revolution in Nepal

The failure of the German revolution prevented the Russian revolution from building a socialist society. But the Bolshevik revolution, even as a degenerated Stalinist dictatorship, survived as workers' property. It would take a political revolution to remove the bureaucracy to open the road to socialism, and that would not come without socialist revolution in the more advanced capitalist countries.

This still holds true today. In the epoch of imperialism, socialist revolution in any backward country, including Nepal, will start as a workers revolution, but to succeed and go on to socialism it must be supported by successful socialist revolutions in the imperialist countries.

What this means is that the Nepalese people do not have to tick off some Menshevik checklist of hoops they have to jump through to complete capitalist development in their own country to prepare for socialism.

Instead they must take the power, socialize the economy and spark the revolution in surrounding countries and in the imperialist powers.

The Nepalese Maoists look to capitalist China and capitalist India for capitalist investment to complete the transition to capitalism and prepare the way for socialism... sometime... never!

No! The Nepalese masses must look to China to win the support of the Chinese working class and the poor peasants to fight to overthrow capitalism now and provide the material aid to allow the socialist republic of Nepal to survive and prosper!

# Survival Socialism

*For the workers to live, capitalism must die! Our immediate needs demand a revolutionary program. No fake market socialism, no fake Marxism, no reforms that cannot change anything –like carbon trading which is business as usual. Carbon trading has been upstaged by human starvation. What if the stink is not methane released by global warming, but the stink of human corpses. Who's going to clean up the stink? Well the workers are not dying on their bellies holding out their hands to parliament, but dying on their feet facing the riot cops and the bosses' armies. What they want now is food, houses, and jobs. They are rapidly learning that what they will have to do to survive is overthrow the capitalist system and replace it with socialism.*

Emissions are the not problem, starvation is the problem. And the cause is not global warming but global profiteering. The cost of food is not due to any shortage but the failure of capitalist production to meet demand for food when it can profit from biofuel, or speculating in hoarding food and fuel. To get the food and the fuel we need to get control of the production system. There is no way we can do this without destroying the market which puts profits before people, and replacing it with a planned socialist economy.

Socialist planning can start to cut carbon emissions the day after the capitalist system is overthrown. First on our list are big oil and gas, second agriculture, third banks and fourth industry. Attempt to tax big oil and gas to force them to adopt clean renewable energy is utopian. They will not do it as the decline in investment in alternative fuels by big oil shows. Big oil and gas must be nationalized without compensation under workers control.

Food can be provided immediately by nationalizing the food multinationals and expropriating the large landholdings under workers control. Energy and land can be developed under a socialist plan by nationalizing the banks and the major sectors of industry.

To do this we need a party and a program that is capable of leading the proletariat in its struggles against capitalism all the way to the socialist revolution.

## Action Program on food and fuel

The Trotskyist *Transitional Program* has the method we need to make an action program for workers to fight for our needs today. By fighting for food, fuel, housing, jobs, wages, workers will learn that to win these demands we must mobilize the working class and its allies as a force capable of taking power.

The main transitional demand to face falling wages and rising prices is the *sliding scale of wages and hours*. Wages must be pegged to inflation and hours reduced without cuts in pay to provide jobs for the unemployed. However, these are not enough to confront rapid inflation such as workers face with rising food and fuel prices.

**Food prices are rising because of increased demand in Asia, land being used for biofuel, hoarding and speculation in food commodities.**

**Fuel prices are rising rapidly because of demand but mainly because of speculation in oil as a commodity of value.**

- For state subsidies all food and fuel prices so they can be afforded. While some regimes (Egypt etc) have introduced subsidies, no nation state can keep the

price affordable to the masses. In NZ the unions should demand that the Labour Government immediately remove GST (goods and services tax) from food and fuel.

- Workers committees to confiscate and distribute food and fuel supplies. Where food is being hoarded, exported or destroyed, workers must demand that this food is nationalized under workers control. Small producers and transport owners who are bankrupted by prices should be compensated. Supplies of fuel should be nationalized and the distribution of fuel put under workers control. Oil and gas production in NZ should be nationalized under workers control with no compensation.
- Nationalise large capitalist agricultural businesses under workers control. Large capitalist corporations that employ managers and wage workers should be nationalized without compensation and placed under the management of the workers. In NZ, Fonterra and other cooperatively owned companies would not have their producer shareholdings nationalised, but they would operate in partnership with a state shareholding that reflects the real level of state investments in food production.

## Statement of Leninist-Trotskyist Fraction

**Venezuela: Reinstate Chirino**

*An international campaign to reinstate a leading member of the UNT (National Workers Union) Class Struggle Current to his job in the state oil company (PDVSA) is being made. Chirino led the oil workers union in the recent negotiations and came into conflict with the Labour Ministry, refused to join the PSUV and called for abstention in the recent referendum. He was sacked from his job as a result.*

**Return Chirino to his job!**

- **The quickest way to achieve this is for the the UNT to break all its links with the bourgeois state and Chavez'es bourgeois government!**
- **For the UNT to set in motion the Venezuelan working class armed with an independent class strategy and program!**

From the Leninist Trotskyist Fraction we demand the immediate reinstatement of Orlando Chirino, a leader of the UNT and member of the UIT, who has been sacked under Chavez's orders, to his job and workplace in the PDVSA.

As a member of a workers organization being attacked by the bosses' state, we defend Chirino unconditionally, and we fight for his reinstatement in the same as we do in the case of any worker who has been sacked and attacked by the bosses. This is for us a fundamental question of principle.

At the same time, we cannot let it pass without saying that that unfortunately this attack on Chirino by Chavez and the "Bolivarian bourgeoisie" comes as a logical consequence of the policy of the UNT leaders' policy of Chirino himself. This includes the subordination of the UNT and the whole Venezuelan proletariat

to the bourgeois state and Chavez government.

**Chirino Chavez man on PDVSA**

As Chirino explains in a letter to the PDVSA chairman, he (Chirino) was appointed by Chavez as a member of the PDVSA board of directors, along with other union leaders, after the defeat of the bosses' lockout in 2002. Chirino says they were appointed

*"to constitute a team of labor and political consultants, in order to advance a plan for getting rid definitively of the old pro-coup, corrupt, bureaucratic union leadership [that of the former central union CTV] and from SINUTRAPETROL [oil workers union] to build a new leadership committed to the revolutionary process of the workers, and to continue to advance the battle against the pro-coup partisans, so providing a guarantee of "gobernabilidad" [that is, the ability of the government to rule without any threat to its legitimacy] of political and labor stability, and also providing a defence of the company (PDVSA) against further attempts at sabotage".*

So it was Chirino in his capacity of a UNT leader who headed the Venezuelan delegation to the 91<sup>st</sup> Conference of the ILO (International Labor Organization) in 2003. Moreover he was the chief delegate at the meetings of that gang of bureaucratic labor traitors chaired by the AFL-CIO in



the following years (2004-2006).

Chirino was, along with Stalin Perez Borges and other leaders of the UNT, one of the main promoters of the "10 million votes for Chavez" campaign for 2006 presidential election.

For this reason, while we demand the immediate reinstatement of Chirino to his job at the PDVSA, we affirm that the only way to achieve that is through the UNT breaking every link with the Venezuelan bourgeois state.

It must also break with Chavez bourgeois regime and call for a Congress of rank and file delegates of the UNT to make the Venezuelan proletariat take up an independent working class strategy.

**This is the shortest road to win the reinstatement of Orlando Chirino to his job in the PDVSA!**



## Appeal to Workers of the World

# Free the Political Prisoners of Las Heras

*We reprint here an edited version of an appeal from Workers Democracy of Argentina which calls for international workers campaign to free the Las Heras political prisoners. This campaign shows that it is the militant vanguard that can mobilize and unite all workers struggles to remove the Kirchner government and form a continent wide force that breaks from the World Social Forum and opens the road to socialist revolution.*

A little over two years ago, in February 2006, the oil workers in the south of Argentina, in the region known as "Patagonia", started an indefinite strike. It was the first strike confronting the "Social Pact" between the union bosses of the CGT and the CTA (the two Argentine central unions) and the bosses' government of Kirchner.

This strike had its epicenter in the province of Santa Cruz, birthplace of Nestor Kirchner who was governor for 17 years, and now continues to rule through front men like the present governor Peralta. Kirchner and his wife Cristina are long standing allies of the oil companies in the region.

### Equal pay and conditions for all

The main demand of the strike was for equal wages and working conditions for all oil workers. That is, equality between the workers "directly" employed by the big oil companies (Repsol, Vintage, Panamerican, etc.) who are members of the Oil Workers Union (benefiting from the relatively better working conditions, benefits, wages, etc.), and "the rest" of the oil workers, who work for the subcontractors (but alongside the "direct" workers, doing the same jobs).

The Oil Workers Union does not recognise the subcontracted workers as "oil workers", so does not recruit them or defend them. This plays directly in the hands of the bosses who say these workers are "construction workers" who get lower pay and worse conditions in Argentina.

Moreover, while the Oil Workers Union members has some job security, the "rest" of the workers were contracted as temporary or part-time workers, alongside permanent workers with the same hours, but were not paid extra hours, and are even "in black" (undocumented). Despite this distinction all the workers went on strike shouting "We are all oil



workers!"

### Down with the tax on wages!

The other important demand of the strike was the rejection of the tax on wages at the same rate as the bosses' profits. As well as the devaluation of 70% of the Argentine peso in 2002, and the high real inflation rate of 20% that year the "better paid" workers were not exempt from the wage tax. The taxes made their devalued wages worse than ever. This is particularly unbearable in the Patagonian region, where the cost of living is much higher than in the rest of Argentina, as it is a remote, isolated area with a very harsh climate.

The struggle around the demands for "equal pay for equal work", and "down with wage taxes", united all the oil workers and threatened to spread to the workers in the rest of the country. The strike posed a threat to the Social Pact signed by the treacherous union leaders, the bosses and its government, to keep the workers quiet in spite of the loss of their wages

and conditions, and to legitimate the repression of demonstrations and strikes.

It would challenge the Social Pact precisely because it is based on the divisions between workers on different wages and work conditions in the same job, the wage tax imposed on "privileged" workers, and the demand that workers increase productivity before they got wage rises. It was also a rebellion against the role of the union bureaucracy that was preparing to sign a new condition in the Social Pact that would have capped wages at 16,5% annually, in two or three instalments, well under the rate of inflation.

### Regime represses strike

The oil workers were striking at a very critical time for the economy and they had every chance of winning. Their victory would have opened the door for the rest of the working class. That is why the bosses and the government stroke back furiously, with the complicity of the union bosses of the Oil Workers Union.

The latter announced they did not back the strike and the demands, and left the Patagonian workers to fight alone without support from the many other oil workers in Argentina working for the same companies. The rest of the union leaders and the top leaders in the CGT and the CTA did not even pay the ritual lip service to the workers solidarity.

The government declared the strike was illegal and sent the police to arrest the delegates and take them to Las Heras (a small town of about 7.000 people). The workers of the nearby oil fields and plants rallied together with hundreds of other exploited people at the gates of the police station, to demand freedom for their representatives. The police responded with a brutal repression, with tear gas, rubber bullets and live rounds fired over the heads of the

people, who defended themselves by any means at their disposal. But after a long battle they could set their leaders free. But in the middle of the fight, a policeman was left dead.

The response of the oil companies and the Kirchner government, with the open and total support of the oil workers union bosses, was repression, like that of the state terrorism of the '70s. Workers and their families were attacked by armed troops and dogs in house by house raids, beaten and abused. Not even children, women or old people were spared. Arrests were made without warrant and without the right to a lawyer.

Some people were "disappeared" for a time. Undercover and intelligence agents were used. In the night cars without registration plates filled workers neighbourhoods shooting indiscriminately to intimidate the people...

### Political Prisoners not criminals

...The authorities applied the entire weight of the state repression on the strikers. On order of the oil companies they arrested dozens of activists and delegates, including their wives, partners and children. All of them were beaten and tortured in the police stations.

While they were charged with "murder" and locked up indefinitely without right of bail while the state looks for evidence to prove the charge. The oil workers had some of their demands partially met to defeat the struggle. As a result the prisoners were then isolated and apparently forgotten in their jails.

Meanwhile the prisoners were labelled "common criminals" and the union leaders made a public apology for the death of the "poor boy, that policeman", as if he had not been engaged in suppressing the strike!

The six main political prisoners have been jailed far from their homes to demoralize them and their relatives even more, under subhuman conditions, and are beaten, abused and harassed by the police daily.

Their families are also being harassed, and they along with their class brother in jail are strong because they are principled fighters and have the support and solidarity of those militant workers that did not abandon them.

### Militant solidarity with the Six

The oil workers, despite the threats, the layoffs, the deployment of more police and gendarmerie to persecute the activists and their families in their homes, have not abandoned the fight. Yet while their struggle is supported by sectors of workers all over the country, the leadership of the main unions and those of the central unions have done nothing but keep silent or pay lukewarm lip service in their defence.

The Six comrades of Las Heras are held hostage by the same oil companies that lock up and torture the workers, exploited and anti-imperialist fighters, including children and old people, in the jails of Iraq, Afghanistan, Israel, Guantanamo, etc., in order to defend their profits. But they are not the only ones in Argentina.

The Kirchner government also imprisons many other workers for similar causes, for example, Jose Villalba (head of an organization of unemployed that were demanding real jobs and not humiliating petty handouts). It is prosecuting more than 5000 workers under serious criminal charges.

Their only "crime" is opposing the interests of the bosses and the transnationals: striking, protesting in rallies and demonstrations against the governments starvation policies, demanding better conditions of work and transport, and rejecting the brutal increase in the cost of living while our rights are violated one by one.

### Regime's 'double standards'

The Kirchner government boasts that it is a champion of Human Rights. To prove it they have put some of the killers during the dictatorship under 'home detention' in luxury homes or hotels. They have everything they want and can be visited freely by their families and associates, despite the fact that they have already been convicted of murders, torture, mass disappearances, baby kidnapping, etc.

The regime has done nothing to find Julio López a key witness to the trials of those charged with the "disappearances" during the dictatorship, who was himself taken

more than a year ago. It has done nothing to protect other witnesses who have been attacked or threatened.

On the contrary, it has ordered the police, the gendarmerie and the coast guard to attack workers' strikes with live ammunition, as was in the case with the teachers, state workers and civil servants, fish canning workers, etc. This resulted in the death of History teacher Carlos Fuentealba in 2007, and many other workers were seriously wounded, imprisoned and persecuted. Again, their only "crime" was to demand a living wage to allow their families to survive.

And where they have not sent their direct agents to repress the workers struggles, they have not stopped the criminal activities of the gangs of thugs paid by the treacherous union bosses, who have smashed with clubs, knives and guns the assemblies of striking workers, terrorizing the workers and their families, destroying their camps outside the locked out workplaces, such as at the French Hospital and the Boat Casino in Buenos Aires City, the workers of the fish packing plants in Mar del Plata, the metal processor and Dana auto parts in Buenos Aires, and many more.

### Held as political 'hostages'

Meanwhile, the prisoners are kept in the worst conditions, in bare, tiny and dirty jails in police stations or in local courts, where they are beaten daily, and their relatives are humiliated and abused and often denied visiting rights.

The families of the imprisoned workers live in a dismal poverty, full of suffering, especially in Patagonia where the temperatures can go as low as minus 22 Fahrenheit with winds up to 180km/hour and sometimes they don't have money for fuel. They only survive thanks to the solidarity of their class brothers and sisters.

The government keeps them imprisoned in an attempt to terrorize other militant workers. They are held hostage by the bosses' state, by the transnationals and the national bosses, in order to prevent the workers from breaking the notorious Social Pact that was signed with the treacherous misleaders of the unions.

They are prisoners of the class war that the bosses have unleashed on us, to keep wages low, destroy the few social and labor benefits that we

still have, and to increase their billions in profits, and forcing us onto starvation wages that cannot even buy the basic food and clothes we need.

They are held hostage to discipline us to accept job "flexibilization", work "in black"(undocumented), long working hours, and dangerous working conditions that every day cause deaths among the workers.

They want us to accept the 19<sup>th</sup> century conditions in health, education and housing conditions, under conditions that can only get worse with the developing world economic crisis and the skyrocketing of the prices of food and oil all over the world.

The social pact between the Cristina Kirchner government and the treacherous union misleaders, all of them servants of the transnationals and their junior partners, the local bosses, is so bad that it asks us to put up with an annual rate of inflation of 40% while our wages are capped and paid in instalments that are limited to 12% annually. This peg on wages is imposed on top of wages that have been falling behind inflation for many years.

### They will not intimidate us!

Meanwhile the regime, the multinationals and the national exploiters take away our country's resources to make them huge profits for their businesses. Do get away with this they have to keep our best fighters in jail, and held hostage, humiliated, brutalized and on the verge of suicide. They have to starve their families and terrorise the working class to divide it and prevent it from acting on the most basic principles of class solidarity and internationalism. To do this they have to launch on us the thugs of the union bureaucracy, the police, the gendarmerie and the corrupt judges that "administrate justice" on the orders of the companies.

Yet they will not win! We are convinced that our class brothers and sisters all over the world will come to our aid, and with our united forces we are sure to set the imprisoned workers free, just as we will then free the imprisoned workers and freedom fighters all over the world, by means of international solidarity and struggle!

We ask that you make solidarity

statements, distribute widely the appeal of the workers and their families, and make financial contributions and messages of solidarity (letters, e-mails, fax, telegrams, messages, voice messages, etc..) to the campaign, and address your demands for the freedom of the imprisoned comrades to the addresses, e-mail addresses, phone numbers, etc., that we have made available below.

### LOI (CI)-Workers Democracy, Argentina, Member of the Leninist-Trotskyist Fraction 28 May 2008

#### 1) Casa de la Provincia de Santa Cruz

25 de Mayo 279 CP (1002ABE) – Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires - Argentina  
Telfax: 4343-8478 / 4342-7756

#### 2) Gobernación de Santa Cruz

Alcorta 231 CP (9400) - Río Gallegos – Santa Cruz - Argentina  
Conmutador (02966) 420421-422291-422757  
[mingobierno@santacruz.gov.ar](mailto:mingobierno@santacruz.gov.ar)  
Sitio oficial del gobierno de la Provincia de Santa Cruz:  
[webmaster@santacruz.gov.ar](mailto:webmaster@santacruz.gov.ar)

Gobernador: Daniel Peralta: Tel. (02966) 420187 Fax (02966) 420139  
e-mail: [gobernador@santacruz.gov.ar](mailto:gobernador@santacruz.gov.ar)  
Vicegobernador: Luis Hernán Martínez Crespo:

Alcorta 431 – Río Gallegos  
Tel. (02966) 422922

Secretario Privado: Juan Francisco Lagos Saavedra: Tel. (02966) 420187

Fax (02966) 420139  
Asesoría de Asuntos institucionales (Vacante):  
Tel. (02966) 420139

Escribana Relatora (Vacante):  
San Martín y Mitre - Río Gallegos  
Tel. (02966) 420051

Secretaría Legal y Técnica:  
Alcorta 231 CP (4900) Río Gallegos  
Conmutador (02966) 420421-422291-422757

Director Provincial de Investigaciones Administrativas:  
Dr. Arturo Pedro Froment:  
Comodoro Rivadavia Nº 185 - Río Gallegos  
Tel. (02966) 422000-423090  
[fiscalia@speedy.com.ar](mailto:fiscalia@speedy.com.ar)

Dirección de Ceremonial y protocolo

RRPP: [ceremonial@santacruz.gov.ar](mailto:ceremonial@santacruz.gov.ar)

#### 3) Gobierno Nacional – Ministerio del Interior

25 de Mayo 101/145 (C1002ABC) – Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires - Argentina  
[info@mininterior.gov.ar](mailto:info@mininterior.gov.ar)  
Tel.: 011- 4339-0800

#### 4) Secretaría de Derechos Humanos – Gobierno Nacional

25 de Mayo 544 – (C 1002ABL) - Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires - Argentina  
Tel.: 011- 5167-6500

#### 5) Secretaría de Derechos Humanos - Provincia de Santa Cruz

Secretario: Alberto Marucco  
Edificio Galeria: Av. Roca 952 2º piso, of. Nº 26 – Río Gallegos  
Tel-fax (02966) 435517-423578 R.P.V. 1521

#### 6) Juzgado Federal de 1º instancia de Río Gallegos (Santa Cruz)

San Martín 709 - Río Gallegos (9400) Santa Cruz  
Telefonos: (02966) 420269/420037/420170  
Juez Camaño - Tel. : (02966) 420253  
Secretaría Penal Hebe Álvarez de Ramírez - Tel: (02966) 420253  
Secretaría Civil Ana Álvarez - Tel.: (02966) 420256  
Secretaría Electoral - Sofia Virtilne - Tel: (02966) 421790

#### 7) Ministerio Público ante el Juzgado de Río Gallegos (Santa Cruz)

Fiscal Dr. Miguel Segovia - Tel.: (02966) 420377  
Defensoría Pública Oficial - Dr. Santiago Fassi - Tel.: (02966) 420376

#### 8) Juzgado de Primera Instancia Nº 1 de Instrucción de Pico Truncado (Juzgado de la causa)

Seminario y Urquiza - CP (9015) – Pico Truncado  
T.E.: (0297) 4992193/4992687  
e-mail: [instruccionpt.com.ar](mailto:instruccionpt.com.ar)  
Secretaría de Instrucción Dra. Griselda Rosana Revai  
Secretaría de Instrucción Dr. Miguel D. Hubert

#### 9) Ministerio Publico

Sarmiento y Urquiza – CP (9010) – Pico Truncado  
T.E.: (0297) 4992697  
Agente Fiscal: Dr. Sergio Armando Gargaglione

#### 10) Comisaría de Pico Truncado

T.E.: (0297) 4993405

## Review

**Maurice Brinton on****The Bolsheviks and Worker Control***Red and Green* 1975. Reproduced at <http://www.spunk.org/texts/places/russia/sp001861/bolintro.html>

*The document has become a standard anarchist text on the subject of workers control during the early days of the Russian Revolution. It makes all the usual arguments that the Bolsheviks were always an elitist vanguard expropriating the democracy of the workers. The long drawn out 'crisis of Marxism' that Trotsky spoke of in 1940 continues. Today its main result is a debasement of Marxism to an anti-capitalist exchange theory that we have referred to many times in Class Struggle as the basis of the WSF theory/program of 'market socialism'. Another effect of the crisis of Marxism is to give anarchism a new lease of life among young people who swallow bourgeois lies about Marxism. Thus the 'Leninist Party' is portrayed as a 'dictatorship' over the workers. What Brinton's article reveals is that his Leninist party 'conspiracy' is nothing other than a defense of bourgeois democracy against workers democracy.*

**In his Introduction to this document Brinton states:**

"Two possible situations come to mind. In one the working class (the collective producer) takes all the fundamental decisions. It does so directly, through organisms of its own choice with which it identifies itself completely or which it feels it can totally dominate (Factory Committees, Workers' Councils, etc.). These bodies, composed of elected and revocable delegates probably federate on a regional and national basis. They decide (allowing the maximum possible autonomy for local units) what to produce, how to produce it, at what cost to produce it, at whose cost to produce it. The other possible situation is one in which these fundamental decisions are taken 'elsewhere'. 'from the outside', i.e. by the State, by the Party, or by some other organism without deep and direct roots in the productive process itself. The 'separation of the producers from the means of production' (the basis of all class society) is maintained. The oppressive effects of this type of arrangement soon manifest themselves. This happens whatever the revolutionary good intentions of the agency in question, and whatever provisions it may (or may

not) make for policy decisions to be submitted from time to time for ratification or amendment."

Here Brinton is setting up an abstract template of the 'good' and the 'bad' of workers control.



'From below' is good and 'from above' is bad. Notice how he builds an anti-party anti-state state ideology into the definition. Party and the state are 'outside' alien institutions which are separated from the working class. They do not have "deep and direct roots in the production process itself", but instead separate the workers from the 'means of production'. Notice too that this separation does not mean 'exploitation' by the party or the state but 'oppression'. I suppose that's because the party is not located at

the 'point of production' so we have to be thankful for that!

Brinton gives us a running account of events year by year. In June 1917 at a conference of Petrograd Factory Committees he comments on Lenin's position on workers control at that time.

"Lenin's address to the Conference contained a hint of things to come. He explained that workers' control meant "that the majority of workers should enter all responsible institutions and that the administration should render an account of its actions to the most authoritative workers' organizations". (13) Under 'workers' control' Lenin clearly envisaged an 'administration' other than the workers themselves."

Brinton seems to think that 'authority' cannot be delegated by workers if it is in a party or state. Yet he quotes with approval a resolution passed by the conference that states in part: "for a proletarian majority in all institutions having executive power". He also quotes Lenin producing a draft [!] for a new Party program on 'workers democracy' in the previous month [May]:

"The Party fights for a more democratic workers' and peasants' republic, in which the police and standing army will be completely



*abolished and replaced by the universally armed people, by a universal militia. All official persons will not only be elected but also subject to recall at any time upon the demand of a majority of the electors. All official persons, without exception, will be paid at a rate not exceeding the average wage of a competent worker".*

Here Brinton introduces another little preconception and snide remark:

"At the same time Lenin calls for the *"unconditional participation [my emphasis] of the workers in the control of the affairs of the trusts"* - which could be brought about *"by a decree requiring but a single day to draft"*. (8) The concept that 'workers participation' should be introduced by legislative means (i.e. from above) clearly has an illustrious ancestry."

**For Brinton, it seems that workers are too stupid to be able to delegate 'authority' in a party or a state to 'legislate' (i.e. from above) without losing control of the party or the state.**

**Brinton then moves on to look at the unions and the struggle for control inside them.**

"On the one hand the unions were the auxiliaries of the political parties, which utilized them for recruiting purposes and as a mass to be maneuvered. On the other hand the union movement, reborn in a sense after February 1917, was pushed forward by the more educated workers: the leadership of the various unions reflected the predominance of a sort of intellectual elite, favorable at first to the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries, but later won over, in varying proportions, to the Bolsheviks.

It is important to realize that from the beginning of the Revolution the unions were tightly controlled by political organizations, which used them to solicit support for their various actions. This explains the ease with which the Party was able - at a later date - to manipulate the unions. It also helps one understand the fact that the unions (and their problems) were often to prove the battleground on which political differences between the Party leaders were again and again to be fought out.

Taken in conjunction with the fact that the Party's whole previous development (including its tightly centralized structure and hierarchical organizational conceptions) had

tended to separate it from the working class, one can understand how heavily the cards were stacked against any *autonomous* expression or even voicing of working class aspirations. In a sense these found a freer expression in the Soviets than in either the Party or the trade unions."

**So unions were politicized. If the Bolsheviks didn't fight to win control this would leave the Mensheviks (reformists) or SRs (petty bourgeois peasantry) in control. What to do? Fight for 'autonomy'! But from what? From class! Why? Because the party is centralized and hierarchical it cannot represent a class.**

But these are scare words that patronize workers as led by the nose first by reformists and liberals and then by revolutionaries. Too bad workers are so easily led. Repeat after me, Party bad, Union good. How come workers don't get the message? OK let's see if things go better in the soviets where the parties are not so firmly established.

Meanwhile before things got out of hand completely the *Second Congress of Factory Committees* resolved to pay 0.25% of their wages to support the 'Central Soviet of Factory Committees'. Surely this was a mistake, due to the undue influence of that Bolshevik hierarchical party? What was going on?

"The Conference resolved that 1/4% of the wages of all workers represented should go to support a 'Central Soviet of Factory Committees', thus made financially independent of the unions. (23) Rank and file supporters of the Factory Committees viewed the setting up of this 'Central Soviet' with mixed feelings. On the one hand they sensed the need for co-ordination. On the other hand they wanted this co-ordination to be carried out from below, by themselves. Many were suspicious of the motives of the Bolsheviks, on whose initiative the 'Central Soviet' had been bureaucratically set up. The Bolshevik Skrypnik spoke of the difficulties of the Central Soviet of Factory Committees, attributing them *"in part to the workers themselves"*. *Factory Committees had been reluctant to free their members for work in the Centre*". Some of the Committees *"refrained from participation in the Central Soviet because of Bolshevik predominance in it"*. (24) V. M. Levin,

another Bolshevik, was to complain that the workers *"didn't distinguish between the conception of control and the conception of taking possession"*.

**In other words the majority supported funding the Central Soviet, but some ("many") expressed doubt about the role of the Bolsheviks who had "bureaucratically" set up the soviet. Once again, the stupid workers pay for something that was bureaucratically set up by the Bolsheviks. What were they thinking?**

When the Bolshevik, Levin, ventures to suggest that some members of factory committees were jealous in guarding their "possession" of the factories, and that they were uneasy about handing over this new property right and sending members to help administer this property right at the center! In other words the center stood for subordinating the factory committees to a centralizing of all factories, and this ran into the petty bourgeois concept of the factory committees being all powerful on their own factory floor!

**We might call this conception of factory committees 'workshop parochialism', or more generously, 'socialism in one factory'.**

Brinton does not make this connection. When he wrote the pamphlet in 1975 the question of factory occupations and the question of coordination between factories, regions and nations (the world!), was barely on the agenda. Today is certainly is, in Latin America at least. In the factory occupations in Argentina for example, there is a tendency for factory committees to also be 'cooperatives' that are actually made up of workers as individual shareholders. And inside these factory committees are reformists that advise workers to use the law to protect their 'cooperatives', and revolutionaries that call on workers to fight for real workers control by expropriating capitalist property in the name of the working class.

**But back to Russia. The question of how socialism in single factories and farms might be made to work everywhere is suggested, vaguely, by an anarcho-syndicalist publication on August 25, 1917.**

*"Golos Truda*, in a famous article headed *'Questions of the Hour'*, wrote: *"We say to the Russian workers,*

*peasants, soldiers, revolutionists: above all, continue the revolution. Continue to organize yourselves solidly and to unite your new organizations: your communes, your unions, your committees, your soviets. Continue, with firmness and perseverance, always and everywhere to participate more and more extensively and more and more effectively in the economic life of the country, continue to take into your hands, that is into the hands of your organizations, all the raw materials and all the instruments indispensable to your labor. Continue the Revolution. Do not hesitate to face the solution of the burning questions of the present. Create everywhere the necessary organizations to achieve these solutions. Peasants, take the land and put it at the disposal of your committees. Workers, proceed to put in the hands of and at the disposal of your own social organizations - everywhere on the spot - the mines and the subsoil, the enterprises and the establishments of all sorts, the works and factories, the workshops and the machines".* A little later, issue No. 15 of the same paper urged its readers to *"begin immediately to organize the social and economic life of the country on new bases. Then a sort of 'dictatorship of labor' will begin to be achieved, easily and in a natural manner. And the people would learn, little by little, to do it"*

Notice that while you are grabbing your factory or farm there is no talk of coordination, of the central soviet, of any organized workers' or peasants' militias or peoples' army. The "organizations" are all of the same weight. Somehow they are going to 'self-administrate'. Workers and peasants, but...no soldiers! This is at the same time that General Kornilov is marching on Petrograd to smash, not workers' autonomy, but ... the soviet! Why? Because the soviet has proven that it is not only organizing a centralized working class led peasant revolution and military mutiny, but is the general staff of that enemy class insurrection. And the Petrograd soviet proves that it is the general staff because it organizes a centralized, armed rout of Kornilov. Not by autonomous, decentralized, non-hierarchical methods. No, by planning a defense that involves sending messengers to the soldiers' soviets, propagandists to win

Kornilov's troops, and by sheer coordination and centralism telegraphing messages and organizing the railway workers to re-route the enemy troops in the wrong direction. When Kornilov found that he troops were deserting him he gave up.

**Brinton has left out a little bit of history [quite a large chunk if you read Trotsky's *History of the Russian Revolution*] here, all to do with the centralized, coordinated and hierarchical 'top-down' central soviet of Petrograd making the defeat of the counter-revolution possible.** Each factory and farm that the anarcho-syndicalists had occupied could now live another day and "the people would learn, little by little". Just as well some other people at the center learned a hell of a lot in one hell of a hurry!

Part of that rapid learning curve at the center was the planning of the insurrection by the Bolsheviks who had won a majority for "all power to the soviets" in the ... soviets. The actual seizure of power was the result of a conspiracy by the Military Revolutionary Committee led by Trotsky (not as Stalin would have it, himself). Like all military campaigns, the authority to make the battle plan was in the hands of a few experts, linked by a chain of command to the most loyal elements of the armed forces such as the sailors of the Kronstadt fortress. The insurrection was as a result of this secret, centralized planning and coordination of the revolutionary workers, peasants and soldiers soviets **already won over** to the revolution, victorious and almost bloodless.

Meanwhile Lenin's mind is racing ahead. While writing *The State and Revolution* which was rudely interrupted by the revolution, Lenin was also thinking of how the revolution would survive the first rough months and years. In *'Can the Bolsheviks retain State power?* published on October 1 just before the insurrection, Lenin states: *"When we say workers' control, always associating that slogan with the dictatorship of the proletariat, and always putting it after the latter, we thereby make plain what state we have in mind... If it is a proletarian state we are referring to (i.e. the dictatorship of the proletariat) then workers' control can become a national, all-embracing, omnipresent,*

*extremely precise and extremely scrupulous accounting of the production and distribution of goods".*

**Brinton thinks that these passages are very revealing of the top-down state dictatorship of the party in the making.**

"In the same pamphlet Lenin defines the type of 'socialist apparatus' (or framework) within which the function of accountancy (workers' control) will be exercised. *"Without big banks socialism would be impossible of realization. The big banks are a 'stable apparatus' we need for the realization of socialism and which we shall take from capitalism ready made. Our problem here is only to lop away that which capitalistically disfigures this otherwise excellent apparatus and to make it still bigger, still more democratic, still more comprehensive..."* "A single huge state bank, with branches in every rural district and in every factory - that will already be nine-tenths of a socialist apparatus". According to Lenin this type of apparatus would allow *"general state book-keeping, general state accounting of the production and distribution of goods"*, and would be *"something in the nature, so to speak, of the skeleton of a socialist society"*.

**Brinton comments:** "No one disputes the importance of keeping reliable records but Lenin's identification of workers' control in a 'workers' state', with the function of accountancy (i.e. checking the implementation of decisions taken by others) is extremely revealing. **Nowhere in Lenin's writings is workers' control ever equated with fundamental decision-taking (i.e. with the initiation of decisions) relating to production (how much to produce, how to produce it, at what cost, at whose cost, etc.).**"[CS emphasis]

Well of course not. The soviets have taken over as the representative organizations of the workers. The soviets have taken power and now are the basis of the state. The dictatorship of the proletariat is exercised through the soviets. Here the planned socialist economy will take shape. The factory committees never coordinated anything before, during or after the revolution, and preferred their autonomous 'socialism-in-one-factory-or-farm' everywhere. They were admirably suited to their basic

duty- to administer and control their factory or farm production according to the overall plan. Why, once a plan is underway should factory committees have any say in whether they fulfill it or not – especially since the economy is almost wrecked by war and headed for a civil war?

**Brinton semi-recognizes these problems in a back handed way.**

"Other writings by Lenin in this period reiterate that one of the functions of workers' control is to prevent sabotage by the higher bureaucrats and functionaries. *"As for the higher employees... we shall have to treat them as we treat the capitalists - roughly. They, like the capitalists, will offer resistance... we may succeed with the help of workers' control in rendering such resistance impossible"*. (36)

**He goes on:** "Lenin's notions of workers' control (as a means of preventing lock-outs) and his repeated demands for the 'opening of the books' (as a means of preventing economic sabotage) referred both to the immediate situation, and to the months which were to follow the revolution. He envisaged a period during which, in a workers' state, the bourgeoisie would still retain the formal ownership and effective management of most of the productive apparatus. The new state, in Lenin's estimation, would not be able immediately to take over the running of industry. There would be a transitional period during which the capitalists would be coerced into co-operation. 'Workers' control' was seen as the instrument of this coercion."

**Brinton still can't see it. He is so enraged by the party conspiracy of the Bolsheviks to impose a party dictatorship on the workers, he overlooks that what is going on is a class war in which the vast majority of workers are fulfilling their various tasks, authorized by the soviets.**

The factory committees are not rendered powerless by this, but able to exercise their power at the point of production in fulfilling their assigned tasks. In other words we have a semi-militarization of industry in which the factory committees are the workers brigades on the front line of production in the overall battle plan of the transition to a socialist

economy. And Brinton is still moaning about book-keeping!

**To prove the Bolshevik conspiracy that he is hunting out, Brinton writes:**

"As already pointed out, the Bolsheviks *at this stage* still supported the Factory Committees. They saw them as *"the battering ram that would deal blows to capitalism, organs of class struggle created by the working class on its own ground"*. (38) They also saw in the slogan of 'workers control' a means of undermining Menshevik influence in the unions. But the Bolsheviks were being *"carried along by a movement which was in many respects embarrassing to them but which, as a main driving force of the revolution, they could not fail to endorse"*. (39) During the middle of 1917 Bolshevik support for the Factory Committees was such that the Mensheviks were to accuse them of 'abandoning' Marxism in favor of anarchism. *"Actually Lenin and his followers remained firm upholders of the Marxist conception of the centralised state. Their immediate objective, however, was not yet to set up the centralised proletarian dictatorship, but to decentralise as much as possible the bourgeois state and the bourgeois economy. This was a necessary condition for the success of the revolution. In the economic field therefore, the Factory Committee, the organ on the spot, rather than the trade union was the most potent and deadly instrument of upheaval. Thus the trade unions were relegated to the background..."* (4) [Pankratova]

**Did Brinton want the revolution to fail?**

Note 39 is a quote from EH Carr, a bourgeois professor of history and an acknowledged authority on...what? That the Bolsheviks had planned a top down revolution and were 'embarrassed' by the bottom up groundswell? The only embarrassment here surely, is that Carr can be taken at his word by a libertarian socialist. The reason is that they share the same anti-Bolshevik prejudice. The only time the Bolsheviks were embarrassed was when they were lagging behind the workers, something Lenin commented on frequently.

The quote from Pankratova states the obvious. How could the Bolsheviks take power and form a

dictatorship of the proletariat without the proletariat? You can only think it strange that the Bolsheviks first tried to promote the Factory Committees, and then seize power, if you think that they were planning to manipulate not only the Factory Committees but the Soviet majorities in a cynical exercise of substituting of party for class. Where were the workers while this maneuver was going on? These same workers, who ran rings around Kornilov and were voting for the seizure of power in the soviets, were simultaneously blind to their status as the puppets of Lenin and Trotsky etc. Who has an interest in promoting the ridiculous view that Lenin and the party necessarily rode roughshod over workers democracy? Only the bourgeoisie who promote *their* brand of democracy, one man-one vote! No wonder the organizers of the Kronstadt rebellion wanted to return to the 'constituent assembly'.

**Brinton concludes with a flourish**

"This is perhaps the most explicit statement of why the Bolsheviks at this stage supported workers' control and its organizational vehicle, the Factory Committees. Today only the ignorant or those willing to be deceived can still kid themselves into believing that proletarian power, *at the point of production* was ever a fundamental tenet or objective of Bolshevism." Yeah right.

The 'point of production' is a romantic conception of the shop floor, abstracted from 'production, distribution and exchange' which has to be taken as a whole, not only in Russia and the other socialist republics that made up the USSR, but most immediately in Europe, where socialist revolution would have created a continental division of labor capable of meeting the needs of all European and Asian workers and thus overcoming the 'scarcity' which was the root cause of the degeneration of the revolution in Russia.

**This brings us to the seizure of power – another supposed top-down stunt behind the backs of the masses. Watch out for Part 2 coming to a computer near you.**

Part 2: October 1917 next issue

# What We Fight For

## Overthrow Capitalism

Historically, capitalism expanded world-wide to free much of humanity from the bonds of feudal or tribal society, and developed the economy, society and culture to a new higher level. But it could only do this by exploiting the labour of the productive classes to make its profits. To survive, capitalism became increasingly destructive of "nature" and humanity. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century it entered the epoch of imperialism in which successive crises unleashed wars, revolutions and counter-revolutions. Today we fight to end capitalism's wars, famine, oppression and injustice, by mobilising workers to overthrow their own ruling classes and bring to an end the rotten, exploitative and oppressive society that has exceeded its use-by date.

## Fight for Socialism

By the 20th century, capitalism had created the pre-conditions for socialism –a world-wide working class and modern industry capable of meeting all our basic needs. The potential to eliminate poverty, starvation, disease and war has long existed. The October Revolution proved this to be true, bringing peace, bread and land to millions. But it became the victim of the combined assault of imperialism and Stalinism. After 1924 the USSR, along with its deformed offspring in Europe, degenerated back towards capitalism. In the absence of a workers political revolution, capitalism was restored between 1990 and 1992. Vietnam and China then followed. In the 21st century only Cuba and North Korea survive as degenerate workers states. We unconditionally defend these states against capitalism and fight for political revolution to overthrow the bureaucracy as part of world socialism.

## Defend Marxism

While the economic conditions for socialism exist today, standing between the working class and socialism are political, social and

cultural barriers. They are the capitalist state and bourgeois ideology and its agents. These agents claim that Marxism is dead and capitalism need not be exploitative. We say that Marxism is a living science that explains both capitalism's continued exploitation and its attempts to hide class exploitation behind the appearance of individual "freedom" and "equality". It reveals how and why the reformist, Stalinist and centrist misleaders of the working class tie workers to bourgeois ideas of nationalism, racism, sexism and equality. Such false beliefs will be exploded when the struggle against the inequality, injustice, anarchy and barbarism of capitalism in crisis, led by a revolutionary Marxist party, produces a revolutionary class-consciousness.

## For a Revolutionary Party

The bourgeois and its agents condemn the Marxist party as totalitarian. We say that without a democratic and a centrally organised party there can be no revolution. We base our beliefs on the revolutionary tradition of Bolshevism and Trotskyism. Such a party, armed with a *transitional program*, forms a bridge that joins the daily fight to defend all the past and present gains won from capitalism, to the victorious socialist revolution. Defensive struggles for bourgeois rights and freedoms, for decent wages and conditions, will link up the struggles of workers of all nationalities, genders, ethnicities and sexual orientations, bringing about movements for workers control, political strikes and the arming of the working class, as necessary steps to workers' power and the smashing of the bourgeois state. Along the way, workers will learn that each new step is one of many in a long march to revolutionise every barrier put in the path to the victorious revolution.

## Fight for Communism.

Communism stands for the creation of a classless, stateless society beyond socialism that is capable of meeting all human needs. Against

the ruling class lies that capitalism can be made "fair" for all; that nature can be "conserved"; that socialism and communism are "dead"; we raise the red flag of communism to keep alive the revolutionary tradition of the *Communist Manifesto* of 1848, the Bolshevik-led October Revolution; the Third Communist International until 1924, the revolutionary Fourth International up to 1940 before its collapse into centrism. We fight to build a new, Fifth, Communist International, as a world party of socialism capable of leading workers to a victorious struggle for socialism.

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